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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/058,619	01/30/2002	Herman K. Dupre	4355	3432

7590 03/30/2004
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EXAMINER

GANEY, STEVEN J

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3752

DATE MAILED: 03/30/2004

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/058,619

Applicant(s)

DUPRE, HERMAN K.

Examiner

Steven J. Ganey

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 January 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 10 and 16-19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 11-15 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 2.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 17-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claims 17-19, there is an inconsistency between the language in the preamble, which recites a hydrant coupling, and body of the claims which also positively recite the combination with the valved air and water hydrants and snow making towers. This makes the scope of the claims unclear since they appear to be reciting the subcombination of the hydrant coupling however, the limitation concerning the combination with the valved air and water hydrants and snow making towers is also positively recited. Applicant is required to clarify whether claims 17-19 are drawn to the subcombination or the combination and to amend the claims to be consistent with the intent. As to treating the claims on the merits, the examiner is considering the claims to be drawn to the combination of the hydrant coupling and the valved air and water hydrants and snow making towers. However, it is recommended that claim 17 be written in independent form to remove any inconsistencies, since the combination is a hydrant station, not just a hydrant coupling.

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Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 10 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rupp.

Rupp shows a hydrant coupling comprising a coupling 55 having coupling ports 16 connected to valves 15/17; and a second port 12 connected to fluid supply pipe via an flexible hose 65, except for a drain valve connected to one of the coupling ports. However, one of the coupling ports 16 could be used as a drain valve via valve 15/17, by simply opening the valve after operation to drain the chamber 13. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to consider one of the valves 15/17 to be a drain valve and to use the hydrant coupling of Rupp for a snow making apparatus, since the hydrant coupling of Rupp is capable of performing applicant's intended use "for coupling to a snow making apparatus", since the other coupling ports could be coupled to one or more snow making apparatuses.

As to claims 13 and 14, tethered plugs are well known in the hydrant art and could readily be attached to the valves 15/17 to protect the openings from damage and from being blocked.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 1-9 are allowed.

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6. Claims 11-15 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

7. Claims 17-19 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Benson, Larrabee, Teglund and Vacher show different couplings having multiple ports. Brown, Pasquier, Dupre '825, Ash, Barrett and Dupre '414 show different types of snow making apparatuses with various coupling devices.

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Steven J. Ganey whose telephone number is (703) 308-2585. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:30 PM.


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Mar, can be reached on (703) 308-2087. The fax phone number for this Group is (703) 872-9306.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.

sjg

3/19/04



STEVEN J. GANEY
PRIMARY EXAMINER
3/19/04